

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (original): An electrical connector assembly having a first electrical connector mateable to a second electrical connector, the electrical connector assembly comprising:

the first electrical connector comprising a plurality of wafers, with each of the plurality of wafers including:

a first insulative housing;

a plurality of first signal conductors, with each first signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a first printed circuit board, a second contact end, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

a shield plate, the shield plate having a plurality of first contact ends connectable to the first printed circuit board, a plurality of second contact ends, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

the second electrical connector having a second insulative housing and ground conductors and second signal conductors in a plurality of rows, with each of the plurality of rows comprising:

a plurality of ground conductors and second signal conductors;

each second signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of one of the first signal conductors, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

each ground conductor having a first contact end connectable to the second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of the shield plate, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

the first contact end of the second signal conductor having a contact tail and the first contact end of the ground conductor having at least two contact tails; and

the second signal conductors and the ground conductors are positioned adjacent to one another so that for each second signal conductor contact tail, there are ground conductor contact tails adjacent either side of the second signal conductor contact tail.

Claim 2 (original): The electrical connector assembly of claim 1, wherein for the second electrical connector, a distance between a second signal conductor contact tail and an adjacent ground conductor contact tail of a row is less than a distance between adjacent rows.

Claim 3 (original): The electrical connector assembly of claim 1, wherein for each of the plurality of rows of the second electrical connector, the contact tails of the second signal conductors and the ground conductors are configured to align along a line when connected to the second printed circuit board.

Claims 4 and 5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (currently amended): An electrical connector assembly having a first electrical connector mateable to a second electrical connector, the electrical connector assembly comprising:

the first electrical connector comprising a plurality of wafers, with each of the plurality of wafers including:

a first insulative housing;

a plurality of first signal conductors, with each first signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a first printed circuit board, a second

contact end, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

a shield plate, the shield plate having a plurality of first contact ends connectable to the first printed circuit board, a plurality of second contact ends, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

the second electrical connector comprising:

a second insulative housing including side walls and a base;

a plurality of second signal conductors, with each second signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of one of the first signal conductors, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the base of the second insulative housing;

a plurality of ground conductors, with each ground conductor having a first contact end connectable to the second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of the shield plate, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the base of the second insulative housing;

the second signal conductors and the ground conductors are arranged in a plurality of rows, with each row having second signal conductors and ground conductors;

for each of the plurality of rows, there is a corresponding ground strip positioned adjacent thereto disposed in the base of the second insulative housing, where the ground strip is electrically connected to the ground conductors of the row; and

~~The electrical connector assembly of claim 4, wherein for the second electrical connector,~~ the ground strip has a first end and a second end, the first end and the second end being bent in the direction of the corresponding row of second signal conductors and ground conductors, and the first end of the ground strip extending beyond an end of the row and the second end of the group strip extending beyond the other end of the row.

Claim 7 (original): The electrical connector assembly of claim 6, wherein the first end of the ground strip includes a contact tail connectable to the second printed circuit board and the second end of the ground strip includes a contact tail connectable to the second printed circuit board.

Claim 8 (original): The electrical connector assembly of claim 7, wherein for each of the plurality of rows, the first contact ends of the second signal conductors and the ground conductors and the contact tails of the corresponding ground strip are aligned along a line when connected to the second printed circuit board.

Claim 9 (original): The electrical connector assembly of claim 8, wherein for each of the plurality of rows, the first contact end of each second signal conductor comprises a contact tail and the first contact end of each ground conductor comprises at least two contact tails so that for each second signal conductor contact tail, there are ground conductor contact tails adjacent either side of the second signal conductor contact tail.

Claims 10-12 (canceled).

Claim 13 (currently amended): An electrical connector assembly having a first electrical connector mateable to a second electrical connector, the electrical connector assembly comprising:

the first electrical connector comprising a plurality of wafers, with each of the plurality of wafers including:

a first insulative housing;

a plurality of first signal conductors, with each first signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a first printed circuit board, a second contact end, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

at least one shield plate, the shield plate having at least one first contact end connectable to the first printed circuit board, at least one second contact end and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

The electrical connector assembly of claim 12, wherein the shield plate also having has first and second edges adjacent the second contact end, the first and second edges being bent in the direction of the first signal conductors of the wafer;

the first insulative housing providing an area which exposes a portion of the intermediate portion of the shield plate;

a conductive member attached to the plurality of wafers, the conductive member electrically connecting to each shield plate at the exposed intermediate portion of the shield plate;

the second electrical connector having a second insulative housing and ground conductors and second signal conductors in a plurality of rows, with each of the plurality of rows comprising:

a plurality of ground conductors and second signal conductors;

each second signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of one of the first signal conductors, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

each ground conductor having a first contact end connectable to the second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of the shield plate, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

the first contact end of the second signal conductor having a contact tail and the first contact end of the ground conductor having at least one contact tail;
and

the second signal conductors and the ground conductors are positioned adjacent to one another so that for each second signal conductor contact tail, there

are ground conductor contact tails adjacent either side of the second signal conductor contact tail.

Claim 14 (original): The electrical connector assembly of claim 13, wherein the shield plate further includes a first plurality of the first contact ends connectable to the first printed circuit board and a second plurality of the second contact ends, the first plurality being greater in number than the second plurality.

Claims 15-17 (canceled).

Claim 18 (original): An electrical connector assembly having a first electrical connector mateable to a second electrical connector, the electrical connector assembly comprising:

the first electrical connector comprising a plurality of wafers, with each of the plurality of wafers including:

a first insulative housing;

a plurality of first signal conductors, with each first signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a first printed circuit board, a second contact end, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

at least one ground member, the ground member having at least one first contact end connectable to the first printed circuit board, at least one second contact end, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

the first insulative housing providing an area which exposes a portion of the intermediate portion of the ground member;

a conductive member attached to the plurality of wafers, the conductive member electrically connecting to each ground member at the exposed intermediate portion of the ground member;

the second electrical connector having a second insulative housing and ground conductors and second signal conductors in a plurality of rows, with each of the plurality of rows comprising:

a plurality of ground conductors and second signal conductors;

each second signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of one of the first signal conductors, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

each ground conductor having a first contact end connectable to the second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of the ground member, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

the first contact end of the second signal conductor having a contact tail and the first contact end of the ground conductor having at least two contact tails; and

the second signal conductors and the ground conductors are positioned adjacent to one another so that for each second signal conductor contact tail, there are ground conductor contact tails adjacent either side of the second signal conductor contact tail.

Claim 19 (original): An electrical connector assembly having a first electrical connector mateable to a second electrical connector, the electrical connector assembly comprising:

the first electrical connector comprising a plurality of wafers, with each of the plurality of wafers including:

a first insulative housing, the first insulative housing having an attachment feature;

a plurality of first signal conductors, with each first signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a first printed circuit board, a second contact end, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

at least one ground member, the ground member having at least one first contact end connectable to the first printed circuit board, at least one second contact end, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the first insulative housing;

the intermediate portion of the ground member having at least one tab member, at least a portion of the tab member being exposed when the intermediate portion of the ground member is disposed in the first insulative housing;

a conductive stiffener attached to the plurality of wafers through the attachment feature of the first insulative housing, the conductive stiffener electrically connecting to each ground member at the tab member;

the second electrical connector having a second insulative housing and ground conductors and second signal conductors in a plurality of rows, with each of the plurality of rows comprising:

a plurality of ground conductors and second signal conductors;

each second signal conductor having a first contact end connectable to a second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of one of the first signal conductors, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

each ground conductor having a first contact end connectable to the second printed circuit board, a second contact end mateable to the second contact end of the ground member, and an intermediate portion therebetween that is disposed in the second insulative housing;

the first contact end of the second signal conductor having a contact tail and the first contact end of the ground conductor having at least one contact tail; and

the second signal conductors and the ground conductors are positioned adjacent to one another so that for each second signal conductor contact tail, there are ground conductor contact tails adjacent either side of the second signal conductor contact tail.